

## **FAQ – Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission Grant Program General**

### **What if applicant is not a formal 501(c)(3) organization?**

In general, organizations that apply for Commission grants need to have IRS designation as a 501(c)(3) non-profit. If your organization does not have this status, you may be eligible to create a partnership with an organization known as a Fiscal Receiver (or Fiscal Sponsor). If you think this might be a good option for you, there is some excellent information on this topic on the Wisconsin Arts Board site "[Using a Fiscal Receiver](#)" or Create Wisconsin "[Fiscal Receiver Services.](#)" **ALL APPLICANTS- INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION- MUST BE A NON -PROFIT 501C3 OR SECURE A FISCAL RECIEVER.**

There are many different types of organizations/individuals that are eligible for both [Project](#) and [Capital](#) Grant Opportunities. See links for a full list.

### **At what point should I be applying as an organization rather than as an individual?**

If the project for which you are applying for funding involves more than two people in carrying out the project's primary activities, you must apply for funding as an organization. If you are applying as an individual, a fiscal receiver is still required. Please contact Commission staff at [danearts@countyofdane.com](mailto:danearts@countyofdane.com) if you have questions about your eligibility category.

### **Does volunteer time count as an in-kind donation?**

If a volunteer contributes something that is in an area in which they possess professional expertise (for which they normally would be paid), then that time and contribution can qualify to count towards in-kind donations in your application budget. Volunteer time for non-professional, expertise-level tasks cannot count towards in-kind donations.

### **What if we don't use all the grant money, do we have to return it?**

Yes. Similarly, if grant money is received, but the project is not completed, the grant money must be returned to the Commission. Please contact Commission staff as soon as you know that your plans for your project have changed from your original application, and we can help you through the process.

### **What if plans change in the evolution of the project?**

If your project plans change significantly from what was indicated in your grant application, please contact Commission staff as soon as possible to discuss your situation. We can help you determine the most appropriate course of action as it pertains to signed grant agreement.

### **How much funding is appropriate to ask for?**

Each grant cycle, the Commission will determine an upper limit for grant requests specific to each and all grant funding opportunities, and this amount should guide your decision. Other considerations: your request amount cannot equal more than 50% of your project budget, and your request amount must be matched dollar for dollar with funding from other sources.

**Is staff willing to review draft applications?**

Yes, Dane Arts staff will review a draft of your application as long as it is submitted at least one week prior to the application deadline. Helping applicants prepare the best application possible is part of the job of Commission staff. Please contact us seeking advice and counsel. Be aware that as grant deadlines approach, the volume of questions rises dramatically. Staff will respond to the best of their ability. Be aware that if a grant deadline falls immediately following a weekend or holiday, staff typically is not available for assistance, including technical related to WebGrants, during non-business hours.

**Can I meet or talk with staff while preparing my application?**

Of course! We are happy to schedule a meeting with you. The best way to request a meeting with Commission staff is to send an email to [danearts@countyofdane.com](mailto:danearts@countyofdane.com) and we'll get one set up with you as soon as possible.

**Can I sit in on review meetings?**

All Commission meetings and grant review meetings are open to the public because the Commission is a division of county government. Anyone is welcome to attend. Grant applicants are sent a schedule of panel review meetings, so that they can judge approximately when they might hear review of their application and others, should they choose to attend. Although these meetings are open to the public, they are not considered public forums, and attendees should not expect to participate in the meeting as anything more than an observer.

**How quickly do I get my grant check?**

If you or your organization is chosen to receive a grant award, the county will begin the process of mailing a check to you in the award amount by sending you a package of documents that need to be addressed and returned. Once you have returned these materials, we will start the internal process of preparing a grant check. However, there are multiple steps in this process that are not controlled directly by the Commission staff. The typical processing time is approximately eight weeks after all documents are received, and we are grateful for your patience during that time!

**What can qualify for the match? Other public grant dollars?**

Earned income, grants & gifts (public agencies, private, individuals) – use budget in application to see what we're seeking. There is an expectation that a portion of the match is made up of cash, not just in-kind (risk associated with project elevates and other community support isn't demonstrated absent cash).

**Do I actually have to provide that 501(c)(3) letter?**

If you are applying as a non-profit organization, we do need to receive your organization's letter confirming 501(c)(3) status. Likewise, if you are using a fiscal receiver or sponsor, you need to provide a copy of their letter confirming 501(c)(3) status. Please contact Commission staff if you have any questions regarding your particular status at [danearts@countyofdane.com](mailto:danearts@countyofdane.com).

**How specific do I need to be with income and expense items?**

The budget inputs within online grant application form do not allow for the input of a range – if you do not have exact numbers, you must do your best to provide a realistic estimate based on whatever amount of research is necessary. Additional information or rationale for your figures is welcome. Income descriptions that generalize, such as “Corporate Support”, do not suffice. The Commission desires to know the specific source of the income. As much information as possible is desired.

**Can I use part of the grant to include the expense of the required certificate of insurance?**

Yes. This expense is considered one of the typical operating expenses for your project, and as such is eligible to be covered by the grant.

**Does the Commission ever provide partial support?**

Yes. The Commission does not consider applications on an all-or-nothing basis. Awards may be made up to and including the amount of the request, so long as the request amount is at or below the request amount limits announced for the grant cycle in question.